

U.S. Application No. 10/816,913

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REMARKS

The Applicant's representative thanks the Examiner and his supervisor for the courtesies extended during the office interview. The following remarks have been prepared to amplify the arguments presented with the amendments in the Reply filed May 7, 2007, with particular attention to the last paragraph of claim 1, at the request of the Examiner.

Claims 1-15 remain pending.

The last paragraph of claim 1 recites:

wherein the first identifiers include first block numbers identifying said first storage blocks in corresponding ones of said other disk array systems, said second identifiers include second block numbers identifying said second storage blocks in said disk array system, and said first block numbers are identical to said second block numbers for corresponding first and second identifiers for all of said disk array system and other disk array systems.

As argued previously, by this feature of the invention, the correspondence established by the first and second identifiers, and the logical partitioning of the blocks of the different disk array systems into equal-length blocks, establishes a correspondence between the storage areas of the disk array systems on a block basis (In the preferred embodiment, on a "parity block basis"). For example, for the same parity block number, there is a correspondence between the parity blocks of the parity storage unit and the data storage units in the preferred embodiment. See the present specification, for example, between page 31 and page 33, with reference to Figs. 16A-16D.

With reference to the last paragraph of claim 1, a "first identifier" includes a "first block number", and a "second identifier" includes a "second block number". The first block number is identical to the second block number for corresponding first and second identifiers of parity blocks, for all of the disk array systems. See, for

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example, parity block number 12356, which identifies the corresponding parity blocks in the parity storage unit and in all of the other data storage units. Comparing the claim to a preferred embodiment disclosed with respect to Figs. 16A-16D, the "disk array system" is supported (but not limited) by the parity storage unit (also storage unit 4 in Fig. 1), the "other disk array systems" are supported (but not limited) by the data storage units (also storage units 1-3 in Fig. 1), the "first block numbers" are supported (but not limited) by the parity block numbers in the data storage units, and the "second block numbers" are supported (but not limited) by the parity block numbers in the parity storage unit. Note that it is the block numbers that are required by claim 1 to be identical, as opposed to the identifiers.

This correspondence allows data on the data storage units to be backed up to the parity storage unit even when the storage system is configured by storage units using storage volumes controlled by different control methods, such as CKD or FBA. Meehan does not disclose this structure or functionality, and the advantages of the novelty are not recognized and would not be obvious from the prior art. It is this point, in particular, that is believed to have not been fully appreciated by the Examiner prior to the interview, and that is believed to have prompted the request for these clarifying remarks.

Although the Applicant believes that the claims are clear, especially in light of the foregoing, the Applicant welcomes the Examiner's suggestions to improve the expression of the invention. Please direct any such suggestions to the Applicant's representative at the number below.

In view of the foregoing remarks, the Applicants request reconsideration of the rejection and allowance of the claims.

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To the extent necessary, the Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of Mattingly, Stanger, Malur & Brundidge, P.C., Deposit Account No. 50-1417 (referencing attorney docket no. 500.43732X00).

Respectfully submitted,

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